

X-TERMINATED WORDS

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In his definitive volume on logology, Language On Vacation (Scribner's, 1965), Dmitri Borgmann points to the existence of three words both beginning and ending with the letter X:

XEROX	the name of a United States corporation manufacturing photocopy equipment
XOLOX	a locality in the state of Mexico, in Mexico
XYLANTHRAX	an old name for charcoal

These three specimens represented all the words beginning and ending with the letter X which were known to logologists in 1965. In the intervening years, a small number of other X-terminated words have been unearthed. The reader may care to learn of them, mentally filling them for possible future use:

XENOMYSTAX	a genus of eels of the family Muraenesocidae, found off the coast of Ecuador (1)
XERUMENEX	a proprietary preparation containing triethanolamine oleyl polypeptide condensate and chlorbutol in propylene glycol (2)
XYLOCALYX	a genus of shrubs belonging to the family Scrophulariaceae, found in Somalia and the Indian Ocean island of Socotra (3)
XYLOTOX	a proprietary preparation of lignocaine, used as a local anaesthetic (2)
XYROPTERIX	a genus of plants belonging to the family Lindseeae, found in Borneo (3)

The numbers in parenthesis identify the references from which these words were taken:

1. The Century Dictionary Supplement, 1909
2. Chemical Synonyms and Trade Names, by William Gardner, 7th Edition, revised and enlarged by Edward I. Cooke, published by The Technical Press, London, 1971

3. A Dictionary of the Flowering Plants and Ferns, by J. C. Willis, 7th Edition, revised by H. K. Airy Shaw, published by the Cambridge University Press, London, 1966

Can readers of Word Ways supply additional examples?

COMMENT (A. Ross Eckler): In a survey of telephone directories, I have noted two dozen United States firms in addition to Xerox that contain words beginning and ending with X. Could the astonishing commercial success of Xerox have been the motivation behind many of these names? XOMOX Corporation has apparently been the most successful in emulating Xerox, for it is listed in telephone directories in the metropolitan areas of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Atlanta, Cincinnati, Houston, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Detroit and Baton Rouge. Only four others are listed in more than one directory: XIDEX Corporation (New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington and Atlanta metro areas), XYTEX Corporation (New York, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles and San Francisco metro areas), XYZYX Information Corporation (Washington and Los Angeles metro areas), and XENEX Corporation (Boston and Detroit metro areas).

The remaining companies are: XETEX Electronics (St. Petersburg), XETEX Inc. (New York), XTALLONIX (Div. of Harshaw Chemical Company) (Columbus), XANTEX Knitting Mills (Montreal), XOTOX Sound Movies (Albany), XOTOX Corporation (New York), XYPEX Chemicals (Seattle), XMATIX Corporation (San Diego), XONEX Corporation (Toronto), XONIX Corporation (Oakland), XIOX International Computer Software Marketing (Miami), XIOX Corporation (Washington), XADEx Systems Operations (Los Angeles), XE-BEX Corporation (Los Angeles), XEPEX Industries (Los Angeles), XERO-FAX (Los Angeles), XENTEX Corporation (Kansas City), XOPOX Plastic Coatings (Phillipsburg N.J.), and XANNAX Corporation (Santa Barbara Cal.).